



In-Session Newsletter

March 28th, 2022

LOCAL PROGRESS

SAFE @ HOME ADDRESS CONFIDENTIALITY PROGRAM

The bill that would authorize the development of a program that keeps the home addresses confidential for survivors of intimate partner violence, sexual assault, stalking and trafficking has been shelved. GWPI plans to pick it up again next Session. GCADV will actively support.

HB847

The Safe Leave bill sponsored by Rep. Michael Smith (Marietta) did not get a committee hearing prior to Crossover Day. GCADV plans to pick this up again next Session.

ON THE LOOKOUT

HB1390

This Anti-retaliation bill sponsored by Rep. Anulewicz (Smyrna) would give county, municipalities and consolidated government employees a right of action when their employer retaliates against them for opposing an act of sexual harassment. **This bill passed the full house and was reported favorably out of Senate committee. The bill is being carried on the Senate side by Sen. Elena Parent (Atlanta).**

HB1452

This amendment to the Dating Violence TPO legislation that was passed last Session is sponsored by Rep. Gaines (Athens) and would extend the amount of time a victim of dating violence has to currently be or have been in a romantic relationship with the abusive partner from 6 months to 12 months. **This bill passed the full House and Senate committee. The bill is being carried on the Senate side by Sen. John Kennedy (Macon).**

HB689

This bill, also sponsored by Rep. Gaines (Athens), would allow victims of trafficking to seal certain criminal history. **This bill passed the full House and has been assigned to Senate Judiciary committee.**

DV/SA FUNDING

Our need to offset the impact of VOCA cuts will not be addressed through the State budget, and it is not likely that additional funding will be included in the State budget for DV programs this year. A very small amount was recommended for Sexual Assault centers in the House budget- an increase of \$53,598 for six partially funded sexual assault centers to match the funding with the other 22 sexual assault programs. If the Senate recommends additional funds, it is likely to be a small amount and will not make a significant impact in service delivery and program sustainability. We are encouraged and hopeful that Gov. Kemp will work with us to resolve the



impact of VOCA cuts with ARPA funds at any time prior to the beginning of the next Federal Fiscal Year. We have a legitimate argument to make that the funds allocated in the state budget are not enough to cover the costs to run DV shelters and SA centers in a way that meets the standards codified in the statute. Off Session, we plan to strategize around how to address this legislatively next year.

UPDATES ON BILLS WE HAVE BEEN WATCHING

[SB359 Safe & Secure Georgia Act](#)

This bill is sponsored by Sen. John Albers (Roswell) and would provide mandatory minimums for persons convicted of possession of a firearm by convicted felons when a person has been previously convicted of a forceful felony, domestic violence or been involved family violence. **This bill passed the full Senate and is assigned to House Judiciary.**

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[SB319 Constitutional Carry Act](#)

This bill has been combined with **HB1358 Chairman John Meadows Act** and is sponsored by Sen. Anavitarte (Dallas) and would remove the requirement that license weapons carriers have to carry a firearms license and would allow lawful weapons carriers to carry firearms-including hand guns and long guns- in parks, recreation centers, and any other place where it is not prohibited by Federal law. **This bill passed the full Senate and has passed out of committee. The bill is being carried on the House side by Rep. Mandi Ballinger (Canton).**

[SB316](#)

This bill is sponsored by Sen. Anavitarte (Dallas) and would make stalking of a minor by an individual 18yrs or older, a high and aggravated misdemeanor. This includes some acts of cyberbullying. **This bill passed the full senate and has been withdrawn from House Education Committee and reassigned to House Judiciary Non-Civil.**

[HB1013 Mental Health Parity Act](#)

This bill seeks to improve access to mental health treatment and would ensure that insurance providers provide the same level of benefits for mental health disorders as they do for physical health disorders. It also establishes involuntary outpatient treatment (assisted outpatient) but reduces the criteria necessary for involuntary commitment. It establishes co-responder crisis teams which would consist of law enforcement and a behavioral health clinician (in-person or on call) and would loosen the requirement for law enforcement to charge an individual with a crime if they are if they are in fact experiencing a mental health crisis. This bill is sponsored by Speaker David Ralston (Blue Ridge). The bill passed out of the House and has been referred to the Senate Health & Human Services Committee.



ACTION ALERT

The application portal for Congressionally Directed Spending requests will close tomorrow, March 29th, at 11:00 p.m. If you are planning to submit your application, please plan to do so, along with a detailed budget and letters of support, by then. If you have any questions, don't hesitate to reach out. Please share with any other groups or individuals as you see fit.

You can find the portal here: [Appropriations Request](#)

**SINE DIE (END OF SESSION) IS ONLY
ONE WEEK FROM TODAY**